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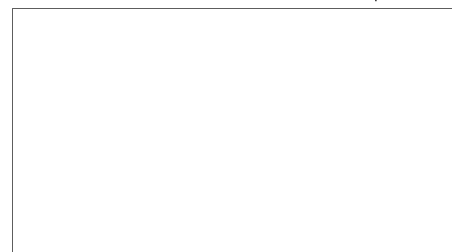
LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

FISCAL YEAR 1982

REPORT OF THE

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE FOR

FY-1982

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REPORT OF THE
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SUMMARY OF HIGHLIGHTS

During FY-82, the number of speaking skills at the professional levels (S-3 and above) possessed by Agency <u>staff</u> personnel kept pace with staff increases and registered a positive change of six percent over the inventory recorded the previous year.

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At the end of FY-82, the Agency had available through its staff and contract personnel ☐ professional level speaking skills in ☐ languages and dialects.

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At the end of FY-82, 49 percent of the Agency's Unit Language Requirement (ULR) positions were occupied by people fully qualified in the requisite language skills; another 26 percent were staffed by employees partially qualified in the language requirements of the position. In the previous year, 50 percent of the ULR positions were occupied by fully qualified individuals and 23 percent by those partially language qualified.

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Total Language School enrollments increased by 7 percent during FY-82; however, this increase is due to an increase in part-time enrollments only. There were ☐ part-time enrollments in 25 languages compared with ☐ part-time enrollments in the same number of languages during FY-81.

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The number of full-time Russian students increased ☐ in FY-81 to ☐ in FY-82 with an additional eleven in the Russian Total Immersion Program which was reinstituted after a four-year hiatus.

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In FY-82, there was a marked increase in both the length of time for which language training was scheduled and the actual time spent in class, indicating a commitment on the part of the directorates to afford students enough time in class to attain measurable language skills.

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During FY-82, there were ☐ speaking gains and ☐ reading gains as a result of training; 51 of the speaking and 99 of the reading gains were from lower levels to minimum professional proficiency.

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The FY-82 cost of the Language Incentive Program was [   ] down 12 percent from that of FY-81.   The lowered cost of the program this year is due to the termination as of 3 October 1981 of awards paid to language specialists.   Included in the FY-82 costs are Use Awards totaling [   ] Achievement Awards amounting to [   ] and Maintenance Awards a[   ]

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DEFINITIONS OF ORAL LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY LEVELS

Elementary Proficiency (S-1):   Able to satisfy routine travel needs and minimum courtesy requirements.

Limited Working Proficiency (S-2): Able to satisfy routine social demands and limited work requirements.

Minimum Professional Proficiency (S-3):   Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics.

Full Professional Proficiency (S-4):   Able to use the language fluently and accurately on all levels normally pertinent to professional needs.

Native or Bilingual Proficiency (S-5):   Speaking proficiency equivalent to that of an educated native speaker.

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DEFINITIONS OF READING LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY LEVELS

<u>Elementary Proficiency</u> (R-1): Able to read simple discourse for informative purposes to satisfy basic survival and social needs. Can get main ideas.

<u>Limited Working Proficiency</u> (R-2): Able to read simple authentic printed material within a familiar context, containing description and narration, to satisfy limited work requirements, discussions on concrete topics and simple biographic information. Reads the facts.

<u>Minimum Professional Proficiency</u> (R-3): Able to read discourse on both concrete and abstract matters addressed to the general reader. Can interpret hypotheses and support opinions. Can read material, written in either formal or informal language, dealing with practical, social, and professional topics. Reads between the lines.

<u>Full Professional Proficiency</u> (R-4): Able to read all styles and forms of the language pertinent to professional needs. Understands almost all sociolinguistic and cultural references, controlling a variety of idioms, colloquialisms and synonyms. Reads beyond the lines.

<u>Native or Bilingual Proficiency</u> (R-5): Reading proficiency equivalent to that of an educated native reader. Can read extremely difficult and abstract prose, e.g., legal, technical as well as highly colloquial writings and the literary forms of the language.
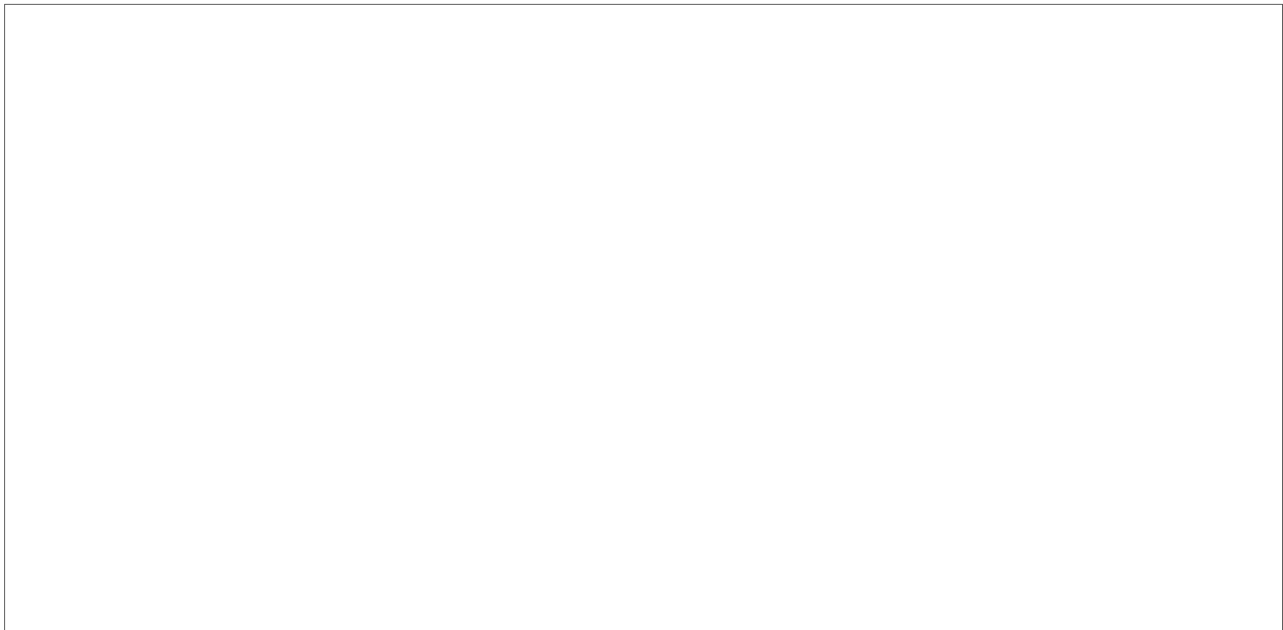
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FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS INVENTORY

As can be seen from Table 1, the number of speaking skills at the professional levels (S-3 and above) possessed by Agency <u>staff</u> personnel kept pace with staff increases during FY-82, and for the second year in a row, registered a positive change of six percent over the inventory recorded the previous year. This increase reflects both renewed interest in the development of foreign language skills on the part of Agency employees and increasing success in the recruitment of employees with language skills at or near the professional level. In addition, the possibility of receiving financial reward for language proficiency through the Language Incentive Program has no doubt encouraged many employees to formalize their study of foreign languages.

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TABLE 1

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Chart I breaks down speaking skills possessed by Agency staff personnel into minimum professional (S-3), full professional (S-4), and native proficiency (S-5) levels and compares the numbers of skills available in FY-82 with those recorded in fiscal years 1979-1981. It should be noted that while a slight decrease occurred in the number of staff speaking skills at the minimum professional proficiency level, skills possessed by Agency staffers at the higher levels (S-4 and S-5) increased significantly over those reported for FY-81.

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Table 2 adds in the professional level skills ⬚ contract employees on record as of 30 September 1982 and shows by language the total inventory of professional level foreign language skills in the Agency at the end of FY-82. Tables 3 and 4 separate these skills into principal and smaller languages and compare the numbers of staff skills available in FY-82 with those resident in Agency staff employees in FY-79.

An overall gain of 59 skills from those registered by staff personnel in FY-79 occurred in the principal languages which represent 80% of the Agency's professional level skills inventory. Nevertheless, losses were significant in French and Spanish (minus 30 and 13 respectively). A gain of 41 professional level skills occurred in Mandarin Chinese during this three year period; increases were also noteworthy in Russian (+18), Portuguese (+17), and Italian (+13).

A comparison of staff and contract skills available in FY-82 with those of FY-81 reveals little change other than a loss in French of 17 professional level skills and a gain of 19 in German. The overall gain since 1979 represents an important change in the direction of the Agency's inventory of professional skills in the principal languages and perhaps signals an end to the long period where any language gains were offset by losses elsewhere.

As indicated in Table 4, the Agency's inventory for FY-82 of staff professional skills in the smaller languages shows a net gain of 45 in comparison with that of FY-79. By way of contrast, in FY-81 there was a gain of just 23 over that of FY-79. The increases in FY-82 are distributed quite evenly among the 41 languages in this group, but are particulary evident in Cantonese Chinese (+17); Indonesian (+14); and Serbo-Croatian (+12). There are no significant losses. Staff and contract inventories in the smaller languages for FY-81 and FY-82 were quite similar, showing a net gain in FY-82 of 18 professional level skills, eight of which were in Indonesian.

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UNIT LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS AND STAFFING

The Agency system for identifying language needs and assessing language capability involves the establishment of Unit Language Requirements (ULR). A ULR refers to a statement by a component as to what positions require knowledge of a foreign language, what skills are needed (reading, speaking, understanding), and at what level of proficiency. Using organizational elements, e.g., an overseas station or a headquarters branch, as the Language Unit, the ULR system permits matching of ULR requirements against the skills (reading, speaking, and understanding or a combination of these) held by any individual in the unit in a specified occupational category. It is important to note that matching is done according to the specific proficiency levels stipulated by the component. This means that, if the requirement for a given language is 3 in reading and speaking, unless the individual possesses at least that level in both skills, the requirements are reported to be partially satisfied if the incumbent possesses some, but a lesser degree of, skill in the language required.

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Identifying ULRs, especially in non-foreign field and non-language specialist positions, becomes difficult when it must be determined if a foreign language skill is required for adequate performance by an incumbent in a specific position or if such a skill would merely be desirable in that it would allow a more efficient performance of duties. The debate over "desirable" versus "required" is one which concerns many Agency divisions. Although a branch may function with the aid of translators, the job may be more efficiently handled by an officer who is proficient in the language concerned. The degree of increased efficiency and whether or not the increased efficiency would merit a ULR is difficult to determine.

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In many cases, Headquarters-based ULRs which were terminated as a result of this debate are now being reviewed for possible reinstatement. At this point, some legitimate Headquarters-based language requirements do not appear in the ULR records; however, concerned divisions are planning a thorough review of all ULRs during FY-83.

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As shown in Table 8 below, the number of language qualified personnel in DDO foreign field assignments has steadily improved over the past four years. Apparently, the Language Incentive Program has been a catalyst contributing to this improvement. In FY-79, nearly 40% of the personnel in foreign field ULRs had no recorded language proficiency. After the inception of the Language Use Award (LUA) Program at the beginning of FY-80, an effort was made to test these previously untested people for award purposes. As field personnel were tested, Language Use awards were paid retroactively to cover time in place while untested; during FY-80 and FY-81, a great number of LUAs were paid on a retroactive basis. Although no specific data is available, Language Incentive Program administrators attest to the fact that the number of retroactive Use awards declined during FY-82 to the point that when most retrocactive awards were disallowed by _____ dated 1 April 1982, it caused   25X1 no problems as virtually all qualified field personnel had already been tested by that time.   25X1

This language proficiency testing alone could have contributed to the gains in skills recorded during FY-80 and FY-81 and supports the hypothesis that the increase in foreign language qualifications in field assignments recorded in FY-82 is attributable both to an intensified effort on the part of DDO divisions to send language qualified personnel to the field and to greater attention being given to language training by both the divisions and the personnel involved.   25X1

TABLE 8

DDO FOREIGN FIELD LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT FULFILLMENT

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TRAINING

The Language School provided instruction in 25 foreign languages during FY-82. Classes were held at Headquarters and at Key _____ Buildings in addition to the regular program at the Chamber of Commerce Building. Fourteen requests for training had to be refused for lack of instructor availability. During FY-82, a teaching capability in _____ and _____ was added to the Language School staff. [_____]

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Language School Enrollments

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In addition to staff training, the Language School provided both full and part-time instruction in 12 different languages to 33 spouses of Agency employees (27 sponsored by the DDO; 3 by the DDI; 2 by the DDS&T; and 1 by the DDA). During FY-82 three members of other government agencies received instruction at the Language School, and at the behest of the Operations Directorate, four representatives of foreign liaison services were enrolled.

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Language Achievement Program

Although FY-82 designations to the Language Achievement Program (LAP) at _____ somewhat down from last year's high _____ designations to the Program since its inception three years ago have more than doubled the number ever in the Language Proficiency Cash Awards Program (LPCA), the predecessor of the LAP.

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CHART III

NUMBER OF LPCA/ACHIEVEMENT AWARD NOMINATIONS & AWARDS
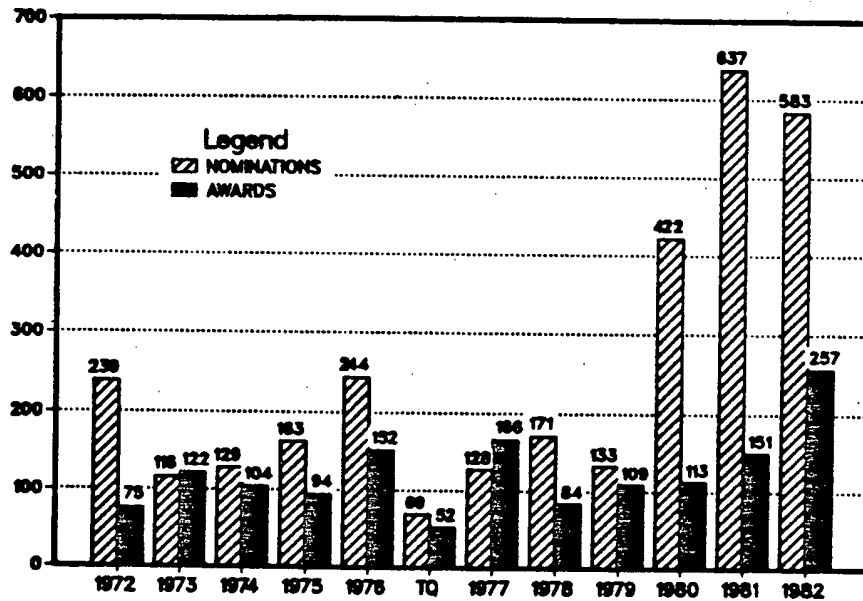
Cash awards for language achievers are beginning to catch up with the number of designations, and the number of awards paid during FY-82 _____ was 70% above the number paid in FY-81 _____ The FY-82 awards exceeded the highest number of awards paid in any one fiscal year of the LAP or its predecessor. _____

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More divisions are beginning to review their policy for language training and are establishing firmer guidelines for office administration of the LIP to provide a more uniform and consistent basis for designations to both the Language Achievement and Language Maintenance Programs. _____

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Language Maintenance Program

Once again the Language Maintenance Program has shown tremendous growth as Program designations in FY-82 increased by 73% over FY-81. Concurrently, Maintenance Program cash awards paid in FY-82 increased by 70% over the number of FY-81 awards.

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The termination of Language Use Awards for Headquarters-based non-language specialist personnel and their consequent enrollment in the Maintenance Program has been partly responsible for the FY-82 growth in the Program. Another factor in the Program's growth has been an increased awareness of the Program on the part of Agency employees. In contrast to the Language Achievement Program where individuals are usually automatically designated to the Program at the beginning of language training or a PCS assignment requiring a foreign language, most divisions require that individuals themselves request participation in the Maintenance Program, providing their own justification for enrollment.

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NEW EMPLOYEES WITH FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS

Career Trainees

[   ] external Career Trainees joined the program during 　25X1
FY-82.   As usual, almost all of them--92 percent in fact-- indicated a
knowledge of at least one foreign language,   and more than half claimed a
proficiency in two or more.   Proficiency testing, however, revealed just [ ]   25X1
professional level speaking skills (S-3) in 11 different languages. This is a
somewhat better result than was realized last year when out [   ] new Career   25X1
Trainees [   ] skills at the S-3 and above level were obtained.   There were   25X1
[   ] reading skills at the professional levels (R-3 and above) compared to   25X1
[   ] FY-81 indicating that the thrust of U.S. foreign language education
remains solidly on the written word. [   ]   25X1

Professional level speaking skills were acquired in the following   25X1
languages: [   ]
Indonesian
[   ] Four of these skills were at the full professional (S-4) or   25X1
native (S-5) level.   Only five of the professional level speaking skills and
eight of the professional level reading skills were obtained by the 16 Career
Trainees who had majored in foreign languages, another indication that
language study through U.S. colleges and universities will not ensure foreign
language competence. Nevertheless, most of the Career Trainees who entered on
duty during FY-82 brought with them at least a rudimentary language base which
should facilitate proficiency gains through further study.   There [   ]   25X1
limited working proficiency level (S-2) skills [   ] at the elementary (S-1)   25X1
level. [   ]   25X1

TABLE 24

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